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Contemporary Photographs of India Complement Major Exhibition at CMA

CLEVELAND — The documentary-style photographs taken by Indian-born Ram Rahman of architecture, signs, and daily life in India's urban areas form a personal diary generously layered with references to politics, economics, religion, and popular culture. Twenty-two of these black-and-white photographs, taken between 1983 and 2001, will complement the major exhibition "**Treasury of the World**": **Jeweled Arts of India in the Age of the Mughals** at the Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA). **Visions of India: Photographs by Ram Rahman** is open Mar. 2 through May 8, 2002. Admission is *free*.

"Rahman's photographs are enriched with wit, happenstance, and a strong sense of design," notes Tom E. Hinson, CMA's curator of photography. "His keen eye focuses on the nuances of contemporary Indian culture. This exhibition is the perfect counterpoint to **Jeweled Arts of India** because it represents a dramatically different period in India's history — the presence of Western pop culture is recognizable in his depiction of the country's cultural heritage and identity."

Rahman tightly balances the subjective and objective in his lively, compelling photographs. A large image such as *Delhi* (1995) depicts a procession that is part of *Ram Lila* — a ten-day festival celebrating the legendary hero Ram. A costumed man, wearing glittering, conical headgear and a tunic adorned with tassels, drives a makeshift float occupied by a painted white bull. A billboard in the background reads "Jumbo," which may reflect the size of the photograph (32 x 40 inches). *Hyderabad* (1983) focuses on the exterior of an optician's shop, from which multiple pairs of large, painted feminine eyes gaze out, accompanied by written messages.

Born in 1955 and educated at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Yale University, Rahman divides his time between New Delhi and New York, working as a photographer, graphic designer, and cultural activist. His work has been featured in numerous exhibitions around the world.

Jeweled Arts of India will be on view from Feb. 24 through May 19, 2002. **Travel Photography: Images of India**, which focuses on images from the 1850s to 1860s, will be open Mar. 2 through July 17, 2002. For more information about these and other CMA events, call **1-888-CMA-0033** or visit www.clevelandart.org.

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